

Brigadier General James D. Owens, Jr.

Deputy Commander, U.S. Army Africa



An Alexandria, Va., native, Brig. Gen. Owens graduated from the Virginia Military Institute and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers in May 1979. As an active duty engineer officer, he served in a variety of command and staff positions with the 82nd Airborne Division and 20th Engineer Brigade. He also served in staff positions with the U.S. Army Engineer District – Far East and as commander of HHC, VII Corps, in Germany. Brig. Gen. Owens left active duty in 1990.

Brig. Gen. Owens served in the Individual Ready Reserve until 1994, participating in numerous overseas exercises as an engineer staff officer. In 1994 he became an Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) with the Corps of Engineers, serving as an assistant resident engineer and then as an area engineer with the Baltimore Engineer District.

Brig. Gen. Owens transferred to Civil Affairs in 1996. He served in various staff and command positions at the battalion, brigade and command levels. He has deployed in support of Operation Joint Forge, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom, commanding at the battalion and brigade levels.

Brig. Gen. Owens served as the Deputy Commander, Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa, from December 2009 until March 2011. He assumed his current position as Deputy Commanding General (IMA), U.S. Army Africa, in February 2011.

Brig. Gen. Owens's military education includes the Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the Combined Arms and Services Staff School, the Command and General Staff Officers Course, the Civil Affairs Officer Advanced Course, the United States Army War College, and CAPSTONE. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the Virginia Military Institute and earned a Master of Strategic Studies degree from the United States Army War College.

His personal decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star (2 Oak Leaf Clusters), Meritorious Service Medal (2 Oak Leaf Clusters), Army Commendation Medal (2 Oak Leaf Clusters) and Army Achievement Medal (2 Oak Leaf Clusters). He has also earned the Combat Action Badge, the Master Parachutist Badge, and the Chilean and Honduran Parachutist Badges.

In his civilian capacity, Brig. Gen. Owens works as an operations research analyst for Northrop-Grumman at the United States Joint War Fighting Center, Suffolk, Va.